

Mark Polyak With His Daughters Valentina Polyak And Ruth Refes



This is my father-in-law with his daughters. From left to right: Mark Polyak, my wife's elder sister Valentina and my wife-to-be Ruth (Refes, nee Polyak). The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1931. I met my Ruth Refes at my friend's place. Ruth was born in Tallinn in 1920. Her father, Mark Polyak, was from Ukraine and her mother, Marta Polyak, nee Kaplan, was born in Tartu, Estonia. Ruth's parents were doctors. She had an elder sister called Valentina, born in 1918. Both sisters graduated from lyceums. In 1939 Ruth was married to a man from Tartu, a lawyer named Evgeniy Refes. Their son Arkadiy was born in 1940. When World War II was unleashed, Ruth, her child and parents were evacuated in Tataria. Her sister Valentina Klompus and her husband stayed in Estonia. Both of them perished. Ruth's husband was in the lines with the Estonian corps. When the war was over the family came back to Tallinn. Ruth entered the Teachers' Training Institute in Tallinn, and graduated from the Foreign Languages Department. When she was teaching English at compulsory school, Ruth extramurally graduated from Leningrad Pedagogic Institute. She left school and started working as an English teacher at the Pedagogic Institute. Ruth is retired now, but she didn't give up her favorite work. She is tutoring at home. Her son lives in the USA. In spring 2005 we went there for a visit. Ruth and I got married in 1957. We didn't have a wedding party. We just had our marriage registered in the state marriage registration office and didn't have any celebration. At that time I just started working and practically had no money. We have lived together since that time. We are happy to have found each other. In 2007 we are going to celebrate our golden wedding anniversary.